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2. In working each day, with the exception of the period from Jan to Mar, which is the off-season and the time when he can have a few days respite, the kolkhoz worker, by carrying out all the work assigned by the overseer, experiences much difficulty in fulfilling the prescribed norms whereby he will be entitled to payment for 200 or 250 working days, at the most. In this instance, the wage scale is not at fault, for it is quite equitable, but the difficulty rests rather in the poor organization of work and the lamentable condition of the equipment. For example, by working at a threshing machine, a farm laborer should normally earn 2.5 or three days' salary per day, a day's wages being determined by a ton of grain. But he must spend a great part of the day attending to the frequent breakdowns of the thresher. Often the thresher can be operated only for two or three hours a day, and even then not satisfactorily. Moreover, the agricultural laborer must furnish himself with his own equipment: pitchforks, rakes, and in particular, scythes for the harvest, which are very difficult to obtain, and baskets for gathering potatoes, etc.

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2

3. At the kolkhoz "Pirmunes" I earned 730 rubles for 114 days of work, which amounts to 6.50 rubles per day. Thus, a day-laborer cannot earn more than 1,300 to 1,600 rubles a year. If you wish to compare these salaries with the price of the commodities which I quoted to you, you will understand the predicament of the kolkhoz worker. The kolkhoz worker works 10 to 12 hours daily - and more in times of emergency.
4. The kolkhoz "Pirmunes" is a farm which has been especially favored, since the norm for a working day has been raised this year to one kg, 900 grams of grain. Last year [1953] the norm of two kg, 500 grams was attained, which demonstrates perfectly the "progress" which collectivization has brought to agriculture. Last year, the workers at the kolkhoz "Paryzlaus Komuna" (The Paris Commune) in the district of Kupiskis were also taxed 75 grams of grain for each working-day. This year I heard of a kolkhoz which is in debt. Consequently, the laborers worked all year for nothing.
5. People leave the country whenever it is possible. But this is not at all easy. In order to leave, an authorization from the Administrative Council of the collective farm is necessary. Such an authorization is required even of the students who wish to enter a university or any other school. In such a case, it is granted without difficulty. If one works on a kolkhoz, it is mainly to have the right to 60 acres of land, which is granted to those agricultural laborers who produce not less than what is required during a period of 100 working-days. The tax on this land has just been lowered from six to three rubles. And from henceforth, the laborer will have the right to cultivate whatever he sees fit without a special tax. In this way, the ingenious kolkhoz worker can successfully raise a cow and fatten a pig. Since he does not have straw, his wife must carry it from the forest in the form of heather, ferns, moss, and twigs, all sack by sack upon her back. He lives on potatoes, lard and smoked ham from his pig, and on skimmed milk, for he must give 250 liters of milk to the State; the remainder of the skimmed milk is used to make butter which he sells at the market in order to pay his taxes.
6. A hired employee also has the right to 15 acres of land if he lives alone and to 25 acres if he has a family. He also has a pig to fatten. But instead of a cow, he has a goat. Of course, in addition to the 250 liters of milk which he must give to the State, he is required to pay taxes and insurance on his farm animals.
7. Working conditions are very difficult. We work ten hours a day, 60 hours a week during the summer in the kolkhoz office with a 10 to 15 minute rest in which we have cold sandwiches. The employees must do the work which is assigned to them; in the winter there is no light in the office. So we must take the accountbooks home in order to work by lamps lighted by our own oil, and often we work until midnight or one o'clock in the morning. In addition to this, most of the employees and the entire body of workers are enrolled in the Propaganda Army. Whether one will or not, each one is required to attend courses in politics, propaganda, Marxism, and the history of the Communist Party, and to prepare meetings and lectures that are either anti-religious or are directed against Western civilization, or are to glorify Soviet writers, etc.

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